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@ COUNTRY WIVES AND CITY MOTHERS @
@ (SHORT VERSION OF THE COUNTRY MAIDEN) @
@ Property of Johnnie Speer. @
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COUNTRY WIVES AND CITY MOTHERS

CAST

JACK HENDERSON LEADS
OLD MAN BAXTER CHARACTER
HARRY FAIR LIGHT HEAVY
JAKE TOBY COMEDY

MRS. HENDERSON GRAND DAME
ROSABELL SOUBRETTE LEAD.

PROPS

Pan of chicken feed
Artists easel

Cigarette Holder

Settee

Two chairs

Spoons

Two Magazines--(Both same kind "American")

Baby (Wrapped up)

Loaded letter

Engagement ring

SETTING

SCENE ONE AND TWO EXTERIOR OF A FARM HOUSE
SCENE THREE PALACE ARCH
SCENE FOUR SAME AS SCENES ONE AND TWO.

COUNTRY WIVES AND CITY MOTHERS

HARRY

(ENTERS WITH JACK) Jack, you are making a fool of yourself. Out of all the good looking girls in the city with wealthy parastats of your own set you have to come out here in the country to paint pictures and then fall in love with this country girl.

JACK

Yes, but, Harry, there's something beautiful about the little girl that lives here. She's ignorant and crude and all of that, but something seems to tell me that she would make a wonderful wife.

HARRY

Now listen you came down here to this God forsaken farm to paint pictures not to get married. Jack, don't upset your home by doing any thing so foolish as marrying that girl. You know your mother would disinherit you if you did. You know your mother wants you to marry that Miss Van Alstine?

JACK

But I don't love her.

HARRY

Well, you'd better learn. Oh I wish we'd never come out to this hick country. (EXITS IN HOUSE)

BAXTER

(ENTERS L.) Oh Rosabell. Rosabell! I say, Mr. Henderson, have you seen anything of my little gal Rosabell around here?

JACK

Yes, Mr. Baxter, your daughter just went into the house. I admire your daughter very much. I think you have a wonderful little place here.

BAXTER

Well, I try to keep it so. By the way, Mr. Henderson, since you've been here you aint had a chance to see my boy, Jake. I'm mighty proud of Jake. He's been away to the other farm over the ridge a workin'. But he's back now. Mighty fine boy. Won the pie eatin' contest. (JAKE ENTERS D.) Here he is. Jake, Meet Mr. Henderson. He's making himself right to home on our farm---he's a painter.

JAKE

Is he? Well, tell him to paint our old barn then!

JACK

Well, Jake, I'm glad to meet you. You are a smart looking young man. have you travelled very much?

JAKE

Been to Armourdale twice't but I can't help it.

BAXTER

Oh I'm proud of Jake look at his hair. Notice how he's broad between the eyes. Just like a good milk cow.

JACK

How old are you?

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JAKE
Eighteen. But I can't help it. I would have been twenty three ma said if pa wasn't so bashful.

BAXTER
My boy makes good grades in school too. He can count up to twelve--- and he's only eighteen years old. Ask him anything and he'll tell you? Whats four and five, Jake?

JAKE
Nine!

BAXTER
See. What's three and one?

JAKE
Shoe Polish!

BAXTER
Correct.

JAKE
But I can't help it.

BAXTER
You can't fool him. What's five and two?

JAKE
Three?

BAXTER
Jake! I'm ashamed of you. Three! Five and two is three! The idea! Andybody knows that five and two is fourteen. Just ask your old dad what you don't know, if I can't tell you, I'll make up something or ask you another one. Well, I guess we better clear out and let Mr. Henderson paint his pictures.

JACK
Oh wait, Mr. Baxter. I have something to tell you. Your daughter, Rose. In the short time I have been here, she has awakened a great love in my heart. I love her and with your permission I would like to make her my wife. Mr. Baxter, I want to make her happy and let her enjoy the riches that I have.

BAXTER
Well, if you love my little girl and she loves you, I won't be the one to say no, but if you air goin' to take her and be mean to her, there aint no power on earth that will keep me from killin' you!

JAKE
Aw, don't kill him, pa. The undertaker's sick now.

BAXTER
(Scuse me for flarin' up, Mr. Henderson, but I do love my little gal and I mean death to the man that harms her, durn my buttons I mean it. (SINGS AS HE EXITS) Shall we gather at the River? The beautiful the beautiful river.

JAKE
Mr. Henderson, when my pa says "Durn my buttons" he means it---but I can't help it. (SINGS) Shall we river at the gather. (EXITS)

JACK
I am going to have her. I love her, and I'm going to settle down here.
(ROSE ENTERS FROM HOUSE WITH PAN OF CHICKEN FEED STARTS ACROSS STAGE):
Wait, Rose, I want to speak to you.

ROSE
Can't wait now---got to feed the old spotted hen and her chicks.

JACK
Never mind the old hen and her spotted chickens. Rose, I have asked your father for his consent to our marriage. I love you---really love you and I want to make you a fine lady! (JAKE AND BAXTER ENTER LISTEN)

ROSE
You---you mean it?

JACK
I swear it. See here is the engagement ring. (PUTS IT ON HER FINGER)
Now you're engaged.

ROSE
Gee! Am I? I don't feel any different. You---you can kiss me if you want to.

JACK
Believe me I want to! (KISSES HER)

BAXTER
Jake! Jake! He kissed her! He kissed her!

JAKE
Well, I can't help it!

***** NUMBER ONE *****

BAXTER
Jake! Jake! (JAKE ENTERS) Now listen, Jake you want to get all dressed up. There's going to be some city folks here today. Just think my little Rosabell is goin' to be married.

JAKE
Well, I can't help it. Gosh, pa, are you going to dress up too?

BAXTER
You bet your life I am.

JAKE
Boy! That'll be funny.

BAXTER
Why you rascal there's nothing funny about your pa. Now get along. You've worried me till you've got my head ringing.

JAKE
Pa, your head can't ring?

BAXTER
Why not? Why not?

JAKE
'Cause anything that's cracked can't ring! (EXITS WITH PA CHASING HIM IN HOUSE)

JACK

(ENTERS R. READING LETTER) "My darling son, I cannot express my regret at your intended marriage, but if you insist upon marrying this country maiden in spite of your family's objections, you have your mother's blessings for a long and happy life" Dear old mother; she means well. God bless her, but her foreboding words make me feel ill at ease.

ROSE

(ENTERS FROM HOUSE IN A SOMEWHAT GAY DRESS) There you are, Jack, I've been looking for you all morning. Say, Jack, how do I look?

JACK

Oh it's all right but it seems---it's rather gay for a trousseau.

ROSE

A what so? Gay? Ain't you supposed to have gay things when you're married?

JACK

(SMILES) It's all right. I'll buy you some good clothes when I go to town.

BAXTER

(CALLS FROM HOUSE) Rosabell, I can't find my suspinders!

ROSE

All right, dad, I'll find them there suspinders fer ye in just a minute. Be out in a minute, Jack. (EXITS HOUSE)

JACK

(SHAKES HIS HEAD) Them there suspinders! (EXITS L. I.)

JAKE

Gosh darn there's more excitement over Rose a gettin' married than they was the day I was born. But I can't help it. (LOOKS OFF L.) My gosh! There comes some of them city folk up the road in their gas wagon now. Hope they don't run over that red heiffer.

MRS. HENDERSON

(ENTERS. VERY MUCH RIZZY) This must be the place. I beg your pardon do you reside here?

JAKE

No, lady---I'm a gentleman and I just live here. But I can't help it

MRS. HENDERSON

I understand there is to be a wedding here between my son, Mr. Jack Henderson and some country girl. I desire to see the father.

JAKE

All right, and who might you be the queen of Sheba or just her grand-ma?

MRS. HENDERSON

(LOOKS AT HIM WITH LORGNETTE) Sir!

JAKE

(CALLS OFF IN HOUSE) Pa, there's somebody out here wants to see you.

BAXTER

Good Lord who be it? I'm tryin' to get shaved. (ENTERS IN SHIRT SLEEVES

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MRS. HENDERSON
This is Mr. Baxter, I suppose.

BAXTER
There aint no supposin' about it that's who I be. Who might you be?

MRS. HENDERSON
I am Mrs. Henderson, Jack's mother.

BAXTER
Jack's mother! Well, I am right down glad to meet ye! (OFFERS HAND)

MRS. HENDERSON
(VERY COLDLY) No doubt!

BAXTER
Reckon as how I aint so gol darn glad as I thought I was.

MRS. HENDERSON
I here to protest against My son marrying your daughter. My son
grow up a man of the world to marry your daughter. He would soon
grow red of and stray away from the path of duty. Now I am
willing to pay a good sum of money for---

BAXTER
Now stop right where ye air, mum. I am only a plain blunt old farmer.
I hain't rich nor gold darn me I hain't poor, but you hain't got
enough money in your cussed city of Philadelphia yonder to make me sell
the happiness of my little gal. Your auto be a waitin' down the road
yonder; you better take it.

JAKE
Yes, and don't toot that automobilious horn like you did comin' up
the road. When you tooted it that old gray mare fainted dead away.

JACK
(ENTERS L.) Mother! I am glad to see you. Are you here for my wedding?

MRS. HENDERSON
I am here to oppose your headstrong foolishness.

ROSE
(ENTERS FROM HOUSE) Oh, Jack, here I be.

MRS. HENDERSON
Jack, my son, is that the girl?

JACK
This, mother, is the lady.

MRS. HENDERSON
So you still insist. Then I disown you. You are no longer a son of
mine. Never come hear me as long as you have her, I am through, I--

ROSE
Wait a minute, madam. I didn't know that I was doing wrong in loving
Jack, but if it's going to make you feel awful bad, I won't hold him
to his promise. Here is the ring!

MRS. HENDERSON
Noble girl!

JACK
You are right. She is a noble girl and I am going to make her my wife in spite of all! (TAKES ROSE IN HIS ARMS)

BAXTER
Jake, he's going to marry her any way!

JAKE
Well, I can't help it! (CLOSE IN)

**** NUMBER TWO ****

(CLOSE IN. CHANGE TO PALACE ARCH) (HARRY ENTERS) MRS. HENDERSON
(AS HARRY ENTERS) Oh there you are, Harry. And where is my son, Jack?

HARRY
I haven't seen him, Mrs. Henderson. I have been out ~~hacking and~~ walking, but now I must dress for your reception I understand that you are entertaining some royalty tonight.

MRS. HENDERSON
Yes, and now we must ~~catch~~ that country wife of Jacks. The little country bumpkin, she is sure to disgrace us.

HARRY
How in the world did you ever come to relent and allow Jack to bring her here to your own house?

MRS. HENDERSON
I had to, Harry. I think the world and all of my boy and I couldn't stand to have him away. I have a reason. I am going to show her up to him so that he will tire of her. She has been with us six months now and her grammar and manners have not improved a particle. I think Jack is tiring of her already. There is only one thing necessary to separate them from each other forever. You must make love to her, get her in a compromising position and then be caught by Jack. When he sees you two in each other's arms he will immediately throw her over.

HARRY
Yes, but what will he do to me?

MRS. HENDERSON
Oh I will save you. When Jack sees you in Roseabell's arms the first thing he will do is order her out of his life forever, then when he questions you, I will tell him that it was all a little scheme of ours to show him how fickle and undeserving this country girl really was.

HARRY
Very well, I shall begin at once.

MRS. HENDERSON
Harry, you are a good boy, and when I die, I am going to leave you a nice little sum of money.

HARRY
Thank you. How do you feel now? No, I mean how do you feel about entertaining so many distinguished guests this evening?

ROSE
(ENTERS L.) Oh Jack. Oh I beg your pardon I thought my husband was in here.

No. My son has not come home yet. He is no doubt out visiting some of his lady acquaintances---possibly he had a late afternoon tea party. Naturally being an artist he has many attractive qualities to offer the ladies you know---(EXITS WITH HARRY R. CATTY LAUGH) (ROSE SITS DOWN AND CRIES)

JACK

(ENTERS R.) What's the matter, Rose?

ROSE

Oh nothing!--I was just missin' you's all. Well, ain't ya gonna kiss me?

JACK

Aint! Rosabell. I've told you about saying aint.

ROSE

Yes, and aint I tried not to say it?

JACK

You are continually using bad grammar.

ROSE

I try not to, Jack---gee gosh I try.

JACK

Rose, why do you always have to say, "Gee Gosh?"

ROSE

Gee gosh I don't know? (HE TURNS AWAY FROM HER. SHE GOES TO HIM) Say, honey, you wouldn't get mad if I told you I sent my folks back on the farm somethings would you? I sent dad a cigarette holder, and I sent my brother Jake a pair of pajamas and some nice little things like that what they've never had afore. Say I ---I got a surprise for you. Know what it is? Father and Jake are coming to pay us a visit. I ain't told you till now, but they ought to be here any minute.

JACK

Oh, Rose, this is terrible. Mother will be frantic. She is entertaining royalty tonight.

ROSE

Well, my pa's just as good as a count any day, and your mother had better not insult him.

JAKE

(OFF STAGE) Hold 'er, pa. I'll bet this is the place. Classy lookin' aint it? Bet we're just in time for supper too.

BAXTER

(OFF STAGE) Jake, you look that way and I'll look this. Guess we'll find my little gal some where around here. (ENTERS R.) Rose---Rosabell!

ROSE

(HUGGING) Oh, daddy. Dear old daddy!

BAXTER

Well, here I am guess I'll stay a couple of weeks. Hello there, Jack, how are you?

MRS. HENDERSON

(ENTERS) WHATS ALL THIS LOUD TALKING?

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BAXTER
Well, slap my tonsils out if it aint the old lady. Howdy, ma, how are you? (GRABS HER HAND)

MRS. HENDERSON
Mr. Baxter, I believe!

BAXTER
You believe? Well, I know damn well it is.

ROSE
Daddy, where's Jake?

BAXTER
He's out there arguing with some great big guy all dressed up in little short pants---we came in the door and he tried to take out hats away from us. The durn fool!

ROSE
Why that's the butler. James we call him.

BAXTER
Well, Jake and me called him something else. Say you ought to see Jake. He's all dressed up. You know them nice things you sent us. we got 'em all on. I got my socks on. And this tie, but durn me I couldn't make this one out. (CIGARETTE HOLDER) What the devil is it?

ROSE
Why, dad, that's a cigarette holder!

BAXTER
Is it? I thought it was a whistle! (CALLS OFF R.) Jake! Jake!
Come in here. Rose is in here.

JAKE
All right. I'll be in there in just a minute. I just knocked that guy out that tried to take our hats. (ENTERS IN LOUD PAIR OF PAJAMAS)

MRS. HENDERSON
Oh, Mercy, what have you got on?

JAKE
My suit---Rose sent it to me.

JACK
Suit! That's no suit. That's a pair of pajamas. That's what you retire in.

JAKE
Well, I aint gonna do it in these.

MRS. HENDERSON
Oh dear! This is too much. Really, Mr. Baxter, I'm afraid we cannot accomodate you---

JAKE
We don't care about the accomodations, we want to know if you've got anything to eat. (SITS ON TABLE)

MRS. HENDERSON
Beast!

JAKE

Well, bring it on; I'll eat it.

ROSE

Don't worry dad we're going to have a lot of cats tonight. The Duke of something is going to be here.

MRS. HENDERSON

Rose, they will not be introduced to my company under no circumstances.

ROSE

My pa's as good as Duke that ever lived.

MRS. HENDERSON

But look at them. They have no evening dress.

JAKE

Gosh, no me and pa always sleep in our B. V. D's.

MRS. HENDERSON

Oh Mercy! I can't bear it! I can't bear it! (EXITS L.)

JAKE

That old dame is cracked in the upper story.

BAXTER

Say, Jack, we--we aint causin' no hard feelin's be we?

JACK

Oh no--not at all. I will have James show you to your rooms--

JAKE

James won't show nobody nothin'! I beat him up!

JACK

Very well, then I shall show them to you. Go that way. (USHERS THEM OFF L.) Rose, you must keep them away from the guests this evening. My mother would never get over the embarrassment of having them meet the royalty she is entertaining. (EXITS L.)

ROSE

Embarrassment. So they think they are too good for my old dad. Well, I don't, and I'll tell 'em so. Oh I wonder why Jack is so cold to me?

HARRY

(ENTERS L.) Ah there you are, Rose. My dear girl did you know I love you madly I want you and I'm going to have you---

ROSE

How dare you!

HARRY

Don't try to evade me! I'm going to have you. (GRABS HER THEY STRUGGLE)

MRS. HENDERSON

(ENTERS L.) Why, Rose, the very idea. I must tell my son of this. (JACK ENTERS L.) Jack, I came in here just now and found that shameless woman in the arms of Mr. Fair.

JAKE

(ENTERS L. WITH BAXTER) Come on, Pa, maybe we'll get something to eat after while.

JACK

Rose, what have you to say for yourself?

ROSE

Jack, you don't think that I---

MRS. HENDERSON

She doesn't dare deny it. She is a shameless wanton creature--she appreciates nothing that we have done for her. She is lacking in all culture and refinement and is little better than--

JAKE

Stop right there in your tracks, you old heifer! Don't call my sister nothin' like that or I'll ---well, you set down for a long while.

ROSE

Father, this is some plot to compromise me. I believe that she has hired this man to insult me with his love.

HARRY

You are right. We wanted to prove to Jack that you were unfaithful I pretended love to you and you fell for it.

MRS. HENDERSON

Yes, she has responded to your love Jack with a brazen effrontery that makes her marriage to you a mockery.

JACK

Rose, what have you to say for yourself?

ROSE

Nothing now! Jack Henderson, you came to my father's quiet little farm and won my love---you married me knowing that I was ignorant and unschooled. Yet you claimed to love me in spite of all. Now you seem to forget. Well, Jack, you may believe what you want to for I am going away. I'm going away from all of you. Father, if you want to believe that I was shameless and loved another man, you may, but I am going away to learn---to study, to work and live by myself--and some day--some day I will make myself worthy of---and better than all of you. Good day!

JACK

Rose, you can't go out like that---you need money and---

ROSE

I don't want a thing you own! (EXITS R.)

JAKE

And neither do I. I don't want nothin' that belongs to none of you. (TAKES OUT SOME SPOONS) Here's some silverware I swiped.

MRS. HENDERSON

Debil! Such actions leave my house at once.

BAXTER

Don't worry Miss. We are going---but before I go, I want to tell you that I think you're all lyin' dogs--and my daughter is as innocent as the day she was born.

JAKE

Sure she was. (TAKES OFF NECKTIE) Here's that necktie you gave me. (HANGS IT ON HER ARM)

BAXTER
(TAKES HIS OFF) Yess and here is mine.

JAKE
Yes, and here's these pajamas or suit you give me. (TAKES OFF COAT)
I don't want it. (STARTS TO TAKE OFF PANTS. MRS. SCREAMS PA STOPS HIM)
Well, I'll send 'em to you by the mail! (CLOSE-IN)

***** NUMBER THREE *****

(CHANGE BACK TO FARM) JAKE
(WINTERS) Pa pa them durned hogs are over in the garden eatin' it up.

BAXTER
(ENTERS WITH MAGAZINE) Oh hang the hogs.

JAKE
All right. I'll go git a rope. (STARTS)

BAXTER
Jake, come back here. Durn yer hide yer gittin' nuttier every day.
Can't you see I'm worried.

JAKE
Well, I can't help it.

BAXTER
Rose a bell has been gone away six whole months--and she's never written me. She must a thought I believed her guilty of waht they said.

JAKE
She was mad that night and she might have jumped in the river, but I can't help it.

BAXTER
No she didn't jump in the river. Here's a magazine article about her. Just think The American Magazine wrote her up.

JAKE
Who'd she kill?

BAXTER
Who'd she kill? Jake, you aint got no brains at all.

JAKE
I can't help it.

BAXTER
I can't help it. I can't help it. That's all you say.

JAKE
I can't help it.

BAXTER
I'm gonna quit talkin' to you altogether.

JAKE
I can't help it!

BAXTER
Shut up. Listen to this. (READS)" In the American Art Exhibit at

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Washington D. C. January 7 the first prize was awarded to a young girl for a painting "The Country Home". Miss Rosabell Baxter is the young lady. Her success is truly marvelous. She worked in a Department Store and painted pictures at night --seeming to have a natural talent for painting--she immediatly rose to the top of the ladder. Great hopes are stored in her.

JAKE

Gosh, how'd they get 'em in her?

BAXTER

What?

JAKE

Says great hopps was stored in her.

BAXTER

Oh shut your mouth--that means her future was insured.

JAKE

Wonder if it hurt?

BAXTER

What hurt?

JAKE

Gettin' her future injured.

BAXTER

Oh shut up. My but I am proud of my little Rose and that husband of hers ought to be proud of her too.

JAKE

He sint no good but I can't help it.

JACK

(ENTERS L.) Oh, Mr. Baxter---did you read it? The moment my eyes glance at it. I jumped in my car and drove here. I thought she might be here. I want her to forgive me. I found out from my mother that it was all a frameup. Mother confessed to me that she wanted the girl driven out of my life and she could think of no better way. Oh I must find her I must have her or I'll go crazy.

JAKE

Well, I can't help it³₄

BAXTER

(LOOKS OFF L.) Why look there's a car coming up the drive way and it's my little Rose now. She's drivin' her own car.

ROSE

(ENTERS DRESSED UP) Father! Dear old father!

BAXTER

Rose Rosabell how we have missed you.

JACK

~~Hatedy-dadredadld-father~~ How we have all missed you. Oh, Rose, please forgive me. I have found out everything and I want you I love you and I don't care whether you have an ounce of education I want you.

ROSE

ROSE
Do you really, Jack. Am I good enough for you---even if I were to use aint?

JACK
Yes! Yes! Now tell us what you have done.

ROSE
Well, Jack, that night I left you---I went to Washington---because I had just saved enough of my own money to get me there. I went to work in a department store. I painted pictures and studied at night in my tiny little room. Painting seemed easy for me; I had watched you at your work, and with the scenes of my childhood home in my memory, I could soon paint beautiful landscapes. And now, Jack, you and I will paint pictures together---you and I. Oh I'm so happy. Jake, there are some things out in my car; go out and get them, and be careful of one thing in particular. (JAKE EXITS L.)

BAXTER
Rosabell how you have changed.

ROSE
Do you think so, daddy?

JAKE
(OFF STAGE) Hey, Rose is this car yours?

ROSE
Yes, Jake.

JAKE
(OFF STAGE) Gosh, where'd you git it?

ROSE
(SMILING) Oh I just picked it up.

JAKE
(OFF STAGE) All these packages yours too?

ROSE
Yes, they are presents for you and dad; I just picked them up.

JAKE
Oh my gosh---look at this---lookee---laokee!

ROSE
Be careful, Jake, don't drop it.

JAKE
(ENTERS L. CARRYING A LITTLE BABY) Is this yours?

ROSE
Yes, Jake--

JAKE
Sure enough is it yours?

ROSE
Why yes, Jake,

JAKE

Gosh, you picked up a lot of things while you was away!

JACK

Oh, Rose, you don't mean--M

ROSE

Yes, it is our little child--Jack--for which I have worked night and day to make myself worthy of it--and I want it to have all the chances in life that I never had. (THEY EMBRACE) (AND LOOK AT THE BABY)

BAXTER

(ALL A TREMBLE) Jake! Jake! Just think! I'm a grandfather!

JAKE

Well, I can't help it!

F I N A L E